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## THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

DELIVERED ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 28, IN ITHACA, N. Y.,  
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ING OF THE ASSOCIATION.

BY M. D. LEARNED.

## LINGUISTIC STUDY AND LITERARY CREATION.

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Language and Literature, which,—to borrow from an old figure,—is language thinking or feeling, must ever be the greatest factor in civilization and the true index of a nation's culture. The teachers of languages are the real builders of the thinking nation. The building process begins with the vernacular and culminates in the appropriation and assimilation of the thought of other peoples and other times in the creation of a national literature. The study of the vernacular and of foreign tongues is *one undivided* process in the evolution of the highest forms of national life and cannot be separated in any adequate system of national education. The question of linguistic study is the most important subject before the American educator of to-day, and the strong competition between the technical sciences and liberal arts in our college curricula is rapidly approaching a crisis much more serious than that of a quarter of a century ago between the modern and ancient languages in the German Realschulen and Gymnasien. The demand of the technicals with us threatens to eliminate all serious study of language, even of English, to make room for the encroaching technical

courses. The same spirit in reality prevails in our professional schools, the lawyer clamors for more law, the physician for more medicine, while the liberal arts are passed by as unnecessary and—what is to the technical mind far worse—*unprofitable*—all signs not the most promising for a great national culture or for a creative national literature.

It is a vital question for us as teachers of modern languages, whether our national greatness shall go up in airships and build castles in the air to last for a day or record its life in imperishable forms of literature and art and take its part in this struggle between the material and the cultural forces in our intellectual life.

America has kept in close touch with each step in the advance of linguistic science in England and on the continent of Europe and has ventured into new and unexplored fields of linguistic inquiry. Our greatest efforts have been directed to pedagogical reform and the traditional methods of German research. It was natural that the spirit of the young grammarians should dominate our activities in both of these fields. Modern language instruction was reorganized in secondary schools and colleges and placed upon a sounder phonetic basis. New text-books were constructed to meet the new requirements and new texts edited for schools and colleges. On the other hand the Young Grammarian spirit of inquiry led to new researches in the various fields of philology, in phonetics and dialects as well as in the history of literature, and stimulated the teacher to the habit and to the fashion of producing "something new." Thus a new standard of qualifications was established. It was no longer enough that the teacher be a native German or Frenchman, but he must have a knowledge of English

as well, and be more than a shoemaker or a tailor with a foreign accent, he must have academic training and be able to carry on scientific research. This is an epochal advance for a single generation.

But it must be admitted, in the face of these improvements in methods of teaching and successes in research, that our efforts have so far been confined for the greater part to what we may call the traditional *craft* of the philologist rather than directed toward the higher work of *creation*, that greatest problem of American civilization, the building of a national literature.

The history of literature shows that the highest aim of linguistic study is to unlock the treasure houses of the thought and life of other peoples and appropriate the spirit, content, and form of other cultures in the creation of a new national literature, to open to the poet the great world of art of which he is a part and product, to emancipate the imagination from the narrow confines of native environment and quicken the national culture by the touch with the universal.

The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are the product not of Athens or Sparta but of that earlier greater Greece which was not confined to ancient Hellas but extended its horizon into Asia Minor and toward the vast expanse of oriental culture, an anticipation of that greater Greece which was to reach out into the valleys of the Euphrates and the Nile, to the coasts of Italy and the Pillars of Hercules. What were Homer without Phrygia and Phœnicia! The Pan-Grecian character of the *Iliad* with its wealth of dialectal forms bespeaks the universally national in the larger colonial spirit of that time.

The great literary revivals of Western Europe began with the study of foreign tongues as the media of new

cultures. It was the study of Greek which gave to Roman literature its models and its rules of literary construction. The Greek colonist brought with him to the shores of Magna Grecia the life-giving culture of Hellas and Hellenized Asia Minor and Alexandria, out of which the schoolmaster of Tarentum, Titus Livius Andronicus, translated the *Odyssey* into the old Saturnian verse in order to win the interest of his public, and from which he translated and adapted his plays, establishing a tradition for the study of Greek, which was still fresh in the schooldays of Cicero and Horace. Ennius, the father of the Latin epic, knew Latin, Oscan, and Greek and borrowed much from the Greeks of Italy and Sicily. Even in the time of Lucullus and Cicero the Roman nobles wrote history in Greek. Horace studied the Alexandrians and Ovid drew freely from the Greek masters. Plautus drew his chief plays from the New Comedy of the Greeks, Terence is said to have translated ninety Greek plays, and even old Cato condescended to learn Greek in his advanced years.

The Hellenized culture and literature of Rome, even in the epoch of Rome's humiliation, extended its sway over the victor and Latin reigned for a thousand years as the dominant speech of western Europe. In the tenth century it was the revival of the study of the Latin poets which gave birth to Ekkehard's epic *Waltharius mannfortis* in the monastery of St. Gall, to the dramas of Hroswitha, the Nun of Gandersheim, and later to the *Hruodlieb*, the first German novel, and to the *Ecclasis Captivi*, the first of the German animal epics—all significant steps toward a national German literature.

After the decline of Greek and Latin literature in Italy and Sicily, it was the foreign idiom of the Pro-

vence and Provençal minstrelsy which awakened Sicilian poetry into new life and brought forth the Sicilian school of poets under the patronage of the German Emperors. In like manner the *langue d'Oc* and the *langue d'Oil* brought the poetry of Provence and the north of France to the banks of the Rhine and the Danube and gave to Germany its golden epoch of the epic and the minnesong. Meanwhile the antique had but slumbered in Italy during the unfriendly reign of ecclesiastical dogma and monastic austerity. In the monastery the monk had kept alive his love for classic poetry and philosophy with their nearness to the heart of nature and of man. A new fresh interest in nature and life finds expression in Dante's *Vita Nuova* and *Divina Commedia*, in Petrarch's *Rime* with the Odes to Laura; Boccaccio's *Amorosa Fiametta* and *Decamerone*—a revival which in the case of Boccaccio was closely akin to the spirit of the antique Greek of which he was an ardent student.

It was this early Italian renaissance, this new spring-time of the antique revival, that kindled in our Chaucer his love of nature and his sense of form during his three visits to Italy,—the first of them in the lifetime of Petrarch and Boccaccio,—and sent back to England the scions which bore the golden fruit of the *Canterbury Tales*.

In the wake of this return to nature and revival of the Greek *naïveté*, the old Greek masters themselves were brought by Greek refugees even before the fall of Constantinople to "Italy and the Lavinian shores." Gemisthos Plethon (1355-1450) promulgated new revolutionary doctrines of social reform. Cardinal Besarion (1403-1472) expounded Platonic philosophy and revived the Platonic Academy, which served as the model for the learned academies of Italy and the western world.

Manuel Chrysoloras (c. 1355-1415), the diplomatic schemer and preceptor of Leonardo Bruni, taught Greek in Florence, Vienna and Rome, translated Plato's works into Latin and prepared the way for his fellow-countrymen of Hellas: Demetrius Chalcondyles (1421-1511) taken by Charles VIII to France; Janus Laskaris (1445-1535), and Markus Musurus (c. 1470-1515), both active in Italy, who after the fall of Constantinople were to inaugurate a new epoch of Greek study in Western Europe and quicken that love of Greek learning, which in the epoch of humanism and renaissance was to emancipate Europe from the bonds of medievalism.

The appearance of Spanish influence in France during the great reckless reign of François I led to the study of Spanish and the translation of Spanish literature, especially the *Amadis of Gaul*, at the instance of the French King, who had read this literature during his captivity in Madrid. It was not long till the Spanish novel in its picaresque type was making epoch in Germany, inaugurating the first important period of the German novel.

The revival of Greek and Latin study in Italy had been followed by a literary awakening in all the countries of Western Europe. The Pleiade in France culminated in the golden age of French literature in the reign of Louis XIV in the works of the classical school—Molière, Racine, and the Corneilles. The study of the antique poetry became a necessity for the school of Ronsard. The language, form, and content of the odes of Pindar and Horace, the elegies of Tibullus, the erotics and bacchantics of Anacreon, the *Pluto* of Aristophanes, Virgil's story of Troy as reviewed in the *Franciade*, the odes of Petrarch, the dramas of Terence and Seneca as recast by Jodelle—all united in giving a new creative im-

petus to the poetry of France in the early sixteenth century. The Italian language furnished the fruitful drama, the *Commedia dell'arte*, which found great vogue on the cisalpine stage both in France and Germany. It was from Italy and the speech of Italy that the idyllic pastoral, that fruitful development of the poetry of Theocritus in the period of the renaissance, came forth in new vigor in Tasso's *Aminta*, Guarini's *Pastor Fido*, Montemayor's *Diana* (1560), and the French *Astrée* of Honoré d'Urfé, evoking imitation of the conceitti in Surrey and Wyatt and in the *Euphues* of John Lyly (1580), the pastoral romances, Sidney's *Arcadia* (1590) and Spenser's *Faërie Queene* (1590), preparing English speech for that highest form of artistic expression in the plays of Shakespeare. In the seventeenth century French language and French literature gained that preëminence which, culminating in the age of Louis XIV, made French the successor of Latin as an international language.

The study of Latin and Greek furnished definite form for the new national literatures, which sprang up under the life-giving impulse of the renaissance. The great literary languages, Latin, Greek, Italian, and French awakened new literary activity in Holland, Germany and England. Opitz, like most of the great writers of Germany in the seventeenth century, made the "Grand Tour," studied the speech of neighboring lands, and took a prominent part in the efforts to create a national language and literature for the Germans, by following the models of the antique and pseudo-antique classics. The poets of the second Silesian school, particularly Lohenstein, imitated the style of the Marinistic school in Italy, which gave to German literary style that greatest of all expansive processes, the rhetorical flower of the con-



cetti, the stylistic magic underlying the master speech of Shakespeare.

The French impulse, which in its early period had influenced Opitz and later attained its fullest power in the works of Molière, Racine, and P. Corneille, became the classic ideal of Gottsched in his patriotic efforts to found a classic German drama and stage in an epoch when French was the language of the courts and men of letters alike. With the rise of German as a literary speech and the awakening of the national consciousness a new spirit entered German literature and with it a new cultural ideal. The fame of Britain's poets and thinkers brought English literature and speech into the foreground of German thought, and the political coincidence of a German King on the English throne drew the two peoples into closer cultural contact. As English plays in Shakespeare's time had reached the courts of German princes, so now a German chaplain officiated at the King's chapel in London and the literature of England began to awaken new life in German literature.

The English weeklies, English criticism, the English epic of Milton, English freethought, the English novel of Defoe, Richardson, Fielding, and Sterne, the English satire of Swift; the English nature poetry of Thompson, the English drama of Otway and Lillo, the English ballad, and above all of the great Shakespeare all broke in upon the German literary consciousness with overwhelming power, and in conjunction with the closely related - revolutionary doctrines of Rousseau brought forth the titanic period of German storm and stress and prepared the way for the classical period under the dominance of Goethe and Schiller. It was the study of English which gave to Lessing his penetrating insight

into the content of English literature and into the kinship of English and German culture and led him to see in Shakespeare not simply the "English Molière," as Voltaire had called him, but rather the true interpreter of human character and the master of dramatic style. Goethe, the greatest German poet, owed his early inspiration as stormer and stresser to this English impulse, and Schiller as a student had his life ambition kindled by the recital of a passage from Shakespeare.

In tracing these familiar currents of foreign speech and thought in the formative processes of European literatures we have been reviewing the antecedents of American literature. We are the heirs of all these races and languages and literary traditions—of the oriental even, of the antique literatures of Hellas, Magna Grecia, Latium, Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Holland, and England, not to mention those more remote races whose culture is now breaking upon our shores with every in-flowing wave of the Pacific, bringing to American civilization the greatest problems and the greatest possibilities in the history of the world.

It is time to speak without apology of an *American* literature. There are still teachers of English in our colleges and universities, who teach American literature—if they teach it at all—as an appendix of English literature, but even a superficial analysis will show that both the language and literature of America have irrevocably departed from British traditions and entered a stage of panethnic evolution which is unique in the history of nations. The languages of Europe, Asia, and Africa have crossed the ocean and taken new root in American soil. Here as nowhere else in the world the interaction of ethnic currents is evolving this ideal of a panethnic republic and

drawing into this stream of nationalization even the conservative peoples of Europe and Asia. The cultural forces which produced the national literatures of Europe have met in one unifying process in American life.

In the formative colonial period of the American nation the ethnic character was clearly impressed upon the institutions and life of the several colonies. In Virginia and Massachusetts the two opposite types of English characters—the Cavalier and the Puritan—have left persistent traces to the present time. In New York, the Dutch was early supplanted by the modified type of New England, and later fused into a cosmopolitan complex, which in the city of New York seems more alien than American. In Pennsylvania the German character and speech still predominate in many localities, while the English, Welsh, and Irish Quaker, Dissenter, and Churchman are still potent forces in the commonwealth. In Louisiana the French character has developed in contact with the German and other race elements a new French American type—the so-called *Créole*. In the wider West there are still ethnic colonies and speech islands fairly distinct from their more English-American neighbors. But notwithstanding these ethnic eddies in the flux and flow of our complex national American culture, the traditions of American literature have not been determined, in the first instance, by these ethnic elements in our population, but rather by the dominant currents of thought in our intellectual life. We inherited through the militant might of the Puritan Fathers and even through the silent non-resisting Quaker the traditions of Puritan England—the austerities of culture, which were best expressed in the religious and theological strife of that time. These traditions rested mainly upon the foundations of Latin and

Greek, particularly of Latin. It was but natural that the age which produced the Anglo-Latin poet Milton should consider Latin as an essential in liberal education. So we took over the English ideal of the classical school in our American colleges of the earlier type.

The revolution brought us into political and cultural sympathy with France, and we began to study French for its literature and art, while Italian was considered a desirable accomplishment in liberal education. Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Payne, and Thomas Jefferson drew deep from the wells of French culture. The doctrines of Rousseau found an echo in the Declaration of Independence, and the spirit of Montesquieu's *Esprit des Lois* is reflected in the American Constitution. America had produced a considerable German literature before the Revolution, and German found its way into the curricula of our older colleges before 1800, but French still remained to us as to the Englishman an important medium of German thought till the end of the eighteenth century. The nineteenth century is preëminently the epoch of German influence in America. The German impulse is by far the most significant of all the non-English ethnic forces in American life. It has given us a new ideal of scholarship, a new method of research, a new type of university, new forms of physical training, a new literary revival in the first great epoch of our national literature in the first half of the 19th century, a new historical method, new forms of music and art, new ideas of thrift and inventive enterprise, and new ideals in economic and social life.

It is these cultural currents of American life which have determined the method and forms of our national education, while the elective affinities of our intellectual life have given direction to the evolution of our national

literature. They account for the presence of German and French as essentials in our schools and colleges and of Italian and Spanish as desirable elements in liberal education.

The weakest point in American education to-day is the teaching of languages. The defect begins with English and continues through the whole range of ancient and modern languages from the elementary school to the university. The root of the evil lies in our general attitude of *indifference* towards the *forms* and *use* of language in America as contrasted with our attitude toward the so-called exact sciences. The necessity of exactness in mathematics, chemistry, physiology is accepted without question, and even in the classics the element of time is liberally conceded, while on the other hand the method of teaching English and modern languages is full of guesses, approximations, and inaccuracies. There is just as serious a need of precision in the pronunciation of a sound or sentence in English, French, or German, as there is of accuracy in solving a mathematic problem or performing a chemical experiment. The pity is, that there is not the same danger of losing a hand or an eye in the linguistic experiment! This indifference—let us call it *slovenness*—in speaking English pursues us into the foreign language classes. The result is that we are marked the world over as poor linguists with an insufferable Americanized accent.

What most Americans know even of English grammar and style is based upon the ancient classics. If Latin and Greek had done nothing else, they would be amply justified by the invaluable service they have rendered in teaching English. The great revivals in European literature show that the ideal aim of linguistic study has been

*mastery*—ability to speak and write the language, to understand the foreign literature and life. The Romans studied the Greek masters to acquire the style and technique as well as the content, and many wrote in Greek. The study of Latin during the Middle Ages had the purpose of speaking and writing the language as a medium of scholastic intercourse. In the period of the reign of French speech in the courts of Europe the ability to speak and write French was the essential accomplishment of a gentleman. In the early days of the English and American colleges, Latin was a means of intercourse within the college walls. The practice of the ages has been to study living language as media of intercourse. Even in the wooden rules of Donatus in the Middle Ages and his successors in the period of humanism the instruction was given in Latin; and the great end of all study—the mastery of the technique and content of the great masters—was the ever inspiring incentive to *command* the language. In all these ages of the past the vernacular method has been pursued. How different from this ideal of a speaking command of the foreign idiom is our method of teaching French and German to college men! The supreme aim of the fitting school is to make the shortest cut to the college, if possible without even the essentials of the grammar. The best years of the college teaching are spent in making good what the fitting school has left undone. For the study of literature, its history and construction there is no time, and any deeper study of the value of the foreign literature as the stimulus to new literary creation in America is quite out of the reach of the college. And yet these golden college years are the vital period for the formation of the literary habits of those who are to produce our national literature. The

woeful waste of time and energy in the teaching of languages in our secondary schools is robbing the nation of its literary birthright and demoralizing education into a jumble of undigested and inaccurate information in language, science, and history, which unfits for the serious work of the college and the more serious work of literary and professional life.

A crisis in the teaching of language in American schools is fast approaching. The curriculum of the college has so far encroached upon the fitting school as to put it out of efficient service, the demands of the technical subjects is fast pushing the study of the languages and liberal arts into the merest formal routine, with no idealism and no efficiency, with not so much as ability to read scientific works in French and German. Indeed there seems to be less real desire on the part of the technical men to-day than twenty years ago to read the newest results of science as soon as they appear in a foreign publication—another sign of the low ideal of our technical work.

It is time for teachers of modern languages and other humanities to cease *petitioning* and begin to *make demands* that must be heeded from the elementary school to the university. It must be understood that there are ideal educational interests even more essential to the nation's progress and life than the art of building bridges, railroads, steamboats and airships—interests that pass down into the future as the means of the nation's greatness and cultural power. The mechanics of the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Egyptians are far less important for us than their creative thought and cultural life which have come down in their literature. It is the imperishable literature and art and philosophy of Greece which secured to Hellas the foremost place in the civilization of

the antique world. It is time that Americans should recognize that these ideal intellectual processes alone make possible the mechanical triumphs of a nation. The highest ideal of intellectual effort in any people is the creation of a national literature reflecting the life and times against the great background of human history—in a word, its life expressed in the forms of literary art.

The foundations of this literary art rest upon an efficient study of foreign tongues and literatures in their relations to the growth of the national language and literary creation. The aims and methods of linguistic study must be revised—nay revolutionized—before modern languages will have their full value for us as Americans. Hitherto we have been misled to accept the grammatical or utilitarian aim of modern language study in the schools, to admit that this study is but a dry, hollow, formal discipline, giving at best ability to read the foreign tongue with a dictionary. But why should the American student of German read the plays of Sudermann and Hauptmann, or even of Lessing, Goethe, and Schiller, or the novels of Alexis, Gutzkow, Spielhagen, Freytag, or Dahn? The labor is great and the reward not apparent. The incentive is wanting. The student thinks the subject unessential to his lifework and therefore not worth the effort.

It is necessary to awaken a new incentive for the study of modern languages, to open the eyes of the student and teacher alike to the necessity as well as the value of such study, not as a vague so-called "culture study," but as a potent formative factor in our national thought and literature. Let the student see that here he will find the processes which gave form to the great masterpieces of French and German writers, and learn to adapt the methods of the master-poets to the changed conditions of American



life and art. Let him learn how with the warp of Hartmann von Aue's *Armer Heinrich* and the woof of Goethe's *Faust* Longfellow created his *Golden Legend*, and how he might have constructed a far more effective drama had he understood more of the German dramatic technique of Goethe and Schiller. Let the American student learn what the quickening touch of German literature was to our first great literary revival in New England in the days of the Concord School and the Brook Farm, what German transcendentalism meant to Emerson and how much a more penetrating knowledge of that philosophy might have clarified and deepened the thinking of Emerson and given us perchance an American Kant. Let him learn that Edgar Allan Poe's best efforts were inspired by the spirit which animated E. T. A. Hoffmann, and how much better the poet might have wrought had the spirit and methods of his predecessors been better understood. Let him see how Goethe found his way by toilsome study and experiment to the spirit and method adopted from the antique and was able to pen his immortal elegies without sacrificing the rhythmic music of his native speech, and how the same spirit found expression in Longfellow's *Evangeline*. Let him follow the steep path by which Schiller climbed from the *Räuber* through the Greek dramatists and Kant to his *Wallenstein*, *Braut von Messina*, and *Wilhelm Tell*. Let him see how Lessing with master-hand in his most modern play, *Minna von Barnhelm*, kept close to the three unities of the antique, preserving naturalness and dramatic interest. Let him learn the meaning of the terms *naïve* and *sentimental*, *antique* and *romantic* and their significance in a modern poet like Walter Pater. Let him awake to the fact that he cannot know his own literature nor create new lasting forms of thought

without understanding the importance of these ethnic currents and their foreign literary technique in American culture and art. Then he will begin to think it worth while to strive for mastery in his study of the masters, to look into the constructive processes of German, French, and other modern literatures. He will do what Goethe did in that apparently aimless winter of 1771-1772 in Frankfort, when he was seeking mastery in his poetic technique, when he was studying Socrates, Xenophon, Plato, Theocritus, Anacreon, and Pindar, and, as he reached the dithyrambic heights of Pindar's Odes, exclaimed in the words of the *Koran*: "Herr, mache mir Raum in meiner engen Brust!" Goethe had found what he was seeking—*mastery*, "Meisterschaft, Virtuosität." To describe the struggle of his mind and feelings (*στῆθος* and *πραπίδες*) he employed this classic figure: "Wenn du kühn im Wagen stehst, und vier neue Pferde wild unordentlich sich an deinen Zügeln bäumen, du ihre Kraft lenkst, den austretenden herbei-, den aufbäumenden hinabpeitschest und jagst und lenkst und wendest, peitschest, hältst und wieder ausjagst bis alle sechzehn Füße in einem Takt ans Ziel tragen—das ist Meisterschaft." Let the technical student learn how the mastery of Latin, Greek, and French gave to Alexander von Humboldt the deep penetrating spirit of philosophic inquiry and scientific research which made possible his *Kosmos*. Let the living example of Montelius with his speaking and writing knowledge of a half dozen modern languages, to say nothing of the ancient tongues, kindle among us the unquenchable desire for linguistic mastery and living intercourse with the great contemporary masters in science, literature, and art.

The time is ripe for a literary awakening. From the

Mediterranean to the Pacific literary creation is groping its way along the misty trails of confused technical traditions instead of rising on the pinions of originality to the clearer height of poetic inspiration. How like the epitome of the literary conditions of Germany, France, England, and America these words in which the Countess Pardo Bazan characterized the "Contemporary Literature of Spain" :

"There is no manner of doubt that at the present moment the literature of science has got a great impetus among us, while that of pure imagination is suffering from uncertainty and fatigue" . . . .

"Although more than 1000 theatrical pieces were presented in Spain last year—flowers of a single day,—the public—always the same—demands novelty. That being so, it cannot expect to have masterpieces."

There is an impression that poetry, being the product of the imagination—half truth from the mistland between science and myth (the child of mystery), has no place in our scientific age of positive truth. This is a widespread fallacy of our time. If we have no poetry, it is because we have no creative imagination or no knowledge of the laws of poetic creation under the new conditions.

The truth of the positivist is after all but half-truth. The science of astronomy made an end of sun worship, but only opened a vista into a still deeper mystery behind the distant stars; chemistry banished alchemy with its vagaries, but with its sister physics is still busy with the mystery of transmuting matter under changed conditions; geology dispelled the theory of a literal creation in seven days, but left the great initial cause undiscovered; philology rejected the linguistic fatherhood of Hebrew, but the origin of language is as much a mystery to us as it was

to Herder; psychology and medicine exposed witchcraft, but the mystery of spiritualism in our day builds temples in which to worship, and telepathy and telegraphy seem magically akin.

No, the conditions for poetry are as good as in the days of old Homer or John Milton. It is the seer who is wanting, the seer who sees backwards and forwards and in the consciousness of his sight clothes his vision in eternal form.

The *uncertainty*, already mentioned, is the curse of the literary creations of our time—a time void of criticism and knowledge of literary form, a time in which the ephemeral newspaper and the popular magazine—not the college teacher of language and literature—are the preceptors of the novelist and the writer of verse. It is—to use the language of my native heath—a “sorry sight” to see the scores of young writers essaying to create a literature for this great people, but ignorant of the first principles of literary construction—novelists whose eyes are blank when the question of the relation of novel and short story is under discussion; dramatists who have never seen Lessing’s *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* or read Wilhelm Schlegel’s *History of Dramatic Literature*; poets who would balk at the study of Schiller’s *Briefe über die æsthetische Erziehung der Menschen* or his essay *Ueber naïve und sentimentalische Dichtung*.

The true aim of linguistic study is to inform, inspire, and adapt the technique of the masters to the literary conditions of our land and time for the creation of a lasting immortal literary form. To the teacher and student of modern languages upon whom this vision has broken in all its brightness, the linguistic dabbings of our schools can be nothing short of educational sin. To the student with this vision of the literary poverty and possibilities

of his people the study of German and French are necessities of culture. He will insist upon a *speaking knowledge* of the foreign tongue from the first and whenever opportunity is offered. He will learn the forms and syntax not alone from the printed page but—what is ultimately the quickest and surest way—by speaking them—the living word. The words of the old German physician to me thirty years ago, “von Mund zu Mund,” will become the watchword. This must be the work of the secondary school and must have more time and better method. In the college the student will study the deeper and far more inspiring forms of literary composition, the genesis of the masterpieces of the great writers of German and French verse and prose, and appropriate them in enriching his knowledge of his own culture and literature, and perchance create an immortal work from the deeps of his own national life.

With this vitalizing reform of our study of modern languages, the noble work of research in our Universities will become correlated. We shall have but a step from the college class to the university seminars. Our research will not be content to follow foreign leads but will go down into the deeper study of the genesis of American culture; scientific inquiry will become creative and the truth newly discovered, creative energy. We shall take our place in literature as we have in material progress, in the lead of the nations. Linguistic study will then lead to literary creation and rear a new race of poets who shall create a new Hellas in far-off Hesperia, a new Parnassus for Greek and Barbarian, a new *ars poetica Americana*.